What is claimed is:

1. A friction resistant blade comprising a blade-shaped substrate base with at least one edge and a protective layer applied to said blade-shaped substrate wherein said blade has at least one edge with a Rockwell C hardness of greater than 70.

2. The friction resistant blade of claim 1 wherein the protective layer is applied to the blade-shaped substrate and heat treated so that the blade exhibits increased Rockwell hardness measurements.

3. The friction resistant blade of claim 1 wherein the protective layer comprises low phosphorous electroless nickel.

4. The friction resistant blade of claim 1 wherein the protective layer is between 0.0002 to 0.0009 inches thick.

5. The friction resistant blade of claim 1 wherein the blade-shaped substrate base comprises carbon strip steel, stainless steel, stainless alloy, bronze or monel.

6. The friction resistant blade of claim 1 wherein the edge is beveled.

7. The friction resistant blade of claim 1 wherein the edge is square.

8. A method of producing a friction resistant blade comprising:

applying a protective layer to a blade-shaped substrate base;

heat treating said protective e layer on the blade-shaped substrate for an amount of time suitable to provide a Rockwell C hardness measurement of greater than 70 to said

protective layer wherein said protective layer is applied to areas of the blade-shaped substrate which contact coatings.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the protective layer comprises low phosphorous electroless nickel.